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Lord A. Harvey. Presents author

SAUL OF TARSUS.

A DRAMA.

In Five Acts.

BY

G. B. PALEY, D.D.

Bp of Exeter

LONDON:

HIVINGTONS, WATERLOO PLACE.

1855.

Price 2s. 6d.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SAUL, *afterwards the Apostle PAUL.*

ANANIAS, *A Christian, living at Damascus, of Jewish extraction.*

CAIAPHAS, *High Priest of the Jews.*

ZECHARIAS, *one of the Chief Priests.*

VITELLIUS, *afterwards Governor of Syria.*

HANAN, *Friend of SAUL.*

HEBRON, *Servant of CAIAPHAS.*

SIMON, *Officer of the Synagogue at Damascus.*

DRUSILLA, *Daughter of CAIAPHAS.*

ANGELS, CHIEF PRIESTS, PRIESTS, ELDERS, &c.

GUIDE to ANANIAS, &c.

SCENE, JERUSALEM, DAMASCUS, and the intermediate parts.

ERRATA, &c.

- Page 1, line 11, *for* Caiaphas *read* Caiaphas.
 — 10, — 13, *for* to *read* through.
 — 15, — 4, *for* Nazarene *read* Nazarean.
 — 18, — 2, 3, *for* has *read* hath.
 — 20, — 2, 3, insert comma before yea, and before and after nay.
 — 22, — 19, comma after trembling.
 — 24, — 5, *for* then *read* them, a period after them.
 — 25, — 8, comma before himself.
 — 26, — 5, *insert* End of First Act.
 — 27, — 19, full stop after Messias.
 — 29, — 19, *for* o'ertake *read* overtake.
 — 32, — 7, *for* lips *read* poison.
 — 33, — 12, *insert* interrogation.
 — 33, — 19, after order, a semicolon.
 — 35, — 3, *for* bourne *read* bourn.
 — 38, — 18, *for* led'st *read* leddest.
 — 42, — 17, *read thus*—

DRUSILLA.

I said he was too forward in his zeal,
 That he had sins, and God would punish them.

HANAN.

Oh, Saul, Saul, &c.

- Page 44, line 10, *for* through it *read* herein.
 — 45, — 11, *insert* comma before and after Hanan.
 — 60, — 2, *read* Stones heap'd on ponderous stones.
 — 62, — 1, comma after soul.
 — 62, — 8, *for* wean'd *read* weaned.
 — 66, — 17, *for* outside *read* beyond.
 — 69, — 3, *for* unruffl'd *read* unruffled.
 — 72, — 6, semicolon after accents.
 — 72, — 8, *read* Her ardent love of justice and of truth.
 — 74, — 16, *read* Except she shall consent.
 — 77, — 7, *for* outside *read* without.
 — 78, — 15, full stop after opposition.
 — 81, — 16, *insert* put after Pilate.
 — 87, — 9, *for* low'ring *read* lowering.
 — 95, — 17, *insert*—

THIRD CHRISTIAN

More welcome, Brother, than that wretched Israel
 Should further pains contract, and added shame,
 Through fresh outpouring of the blood of innocence.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SAUL OF TARSUS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*High Priest's Palace at Jerusalem.*

Enter HANAN and DRUSILLA.

DRUSILLA.

ERE it be noon I shall Damascus seek,
Within that city we have kindred living.

HANAN.

May God's best blessings go along with thee,
But say, thou dearest one on earth, Drusilla,
What answer Caiaphas made my urgent prayer.

DRUSILLA.

Hanan, you are too hasty in that question,
And build your hopes too boldly ; a true son

Of Tarsus, that fam'd city, which, 'tis said,
Is in naught debtor to the hand of Time
For all its present size and comeliness,
But which, within the compass of one day,
Sardanapalus saw commenc'd and finish'd.

HANAN.

Dear lady, I accept your most kind plea
For my impetuous words, intemperate actions ;
You know and pardon them ; pledge your forgiveness
In one sweet smile, then let me hear what answer
Fell from your honour'd father's priestly lips.

DRUSILLA.

My father bade me say he gives consent,
And I must own that I will not resist
Further your suit.

HANAN.

A thousand thanks, Drusilla,
I owe your father and to you ten thousand,
And this the more if that the wish'd for hour
Be near at hand which seals our wedded lot.



Syria doth greatly boast of her Damascus,
Its massive walls, its regal palaces,
And the so frequent mention of that city
By Zion's prophets doth endear it to us,
Yet hasten back to your paternal halls.

DRUSILLA.

My father's strength doth ebb. A weight of grief
Moreover seems just now to press upon him.
Would that he sought for help to our Jehovah !
Alas ! he looks to man. 'Tis mine to strive,
By wise and gentle counsel and by prayer,
By fervent prayer to God on his behalf,
Some change to work. My duty and my heart
Will quicken my return to hoar Jerusalem. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Court of the Temple, Jerusalem.

Enter ANANIAS and CHRISTIAN FRIEND.

FRIEND.

Full fifty golden harvests we have reap'd

Since this majestic pile began to rise.
How old the world doth grow, my Ananias !

ANANIAS.

Ourselves grow old. This mass of polish'd stone
Looks yet in youth, but we at fifty, brother,
May deem our tale of life told in the main.

FRIEND.

The carnal man doth soon attain his prime,
Not so the true disciple ; he doth soar
In contemplation, purity, and hope,
Ever still higher, yet the meanwhile sinks
The deeper in profoundest self-abasement :
Such is thy course, thou favour'd of the Lord.

Enter SAUL and HANAN.

Saul ! see the man you threaten'd yesterday.

SAUL (*to ANANIAS*).

Dost tarry yet in this ill-fated city ?
Thy name I learnt, and that of thine abode :
Thy name is Ananias, and thine home
Damascus ;—but can nothing less suffice thee



Than with thy poisonous breath to taint the air
About our holy temple? Be no more
That wretched man set forth, that Galilean.
I bid thee into silence, or thy life
Shall pay the forfeit. 'Tis my constant prayer
That God would shortly rid us of this heresy.

ANANIAS.


Do you suppose that prayers to the Most High
Are offer'd but by those who hate Messias?
Moreover, I would state to you this truth,
That they who preach the ever blessed name
Of Jesus Christ, the very Son of God,
His word proclaim to whom your knees are bent.

SAUL.

Should I restrain myself? Oh, Great Jehovah!
Vengeance is thine. When will their sins be ripe?
When will the gaping earth swallow them whole,
These impious Nazarenes?

ANANIAS.

The earth did quake



But recently—when Jesus was cut off.
The sun, which every other crime has seen
Unflinchingly, could not behold that deed.

SAUL.

Tempt me not further, God has given me power,
Our city has nigh purg'd away her dross.
Who preaches here th' accursed name?—Not one.

ANANIAS.

Alas ! how few :—yet, since the fate of Stephen,
It hath spread far and wide throughout the world.

SAUL.

Ere long we may stone Stephens at Damascus ;
But should this Ananias linger here,
These tow'rs may see it done. This warning take.

ANANIAS.

That we, disciples of the blessed Jesus
Are of our worldly gainings quite despoil'd ;
That we are pelted, spit on, and in holes
Dark and unwholesome prison'd ; that we are maim'd,
With hunger wasted, and from wilds remote



Sought out to be with fiendlike fury slaughter'd,—
This is most true ; yea, held it is that naught
So fits our pertinacity as pains
Protracted long ; through these especially
Our deadly foes hope from us to extract
Some lip disparagement of Him we serve.
Yet mark the words of Him who sang of old,—
Why rise against me, all ye earthly powers ?
My Son, yea Jesus, shall in Zion reign.

SAUL.

'Twere idle with long winded Nazarenes,
Distress'd in means, devoid of arguments,
To bandy words. God doth Himself hold forth
That which alone can work a perfect cure—
“ Let them be ston'd, let no man pity them.”

ANANIAS.

At thee, oh bloody and adulterous city !
Men shalt cast stones ere long—yea, bury thee.
What prophet hath not suffer'd by thy malice ?
Oh, hasten on in crime, pour in, pour in

With eager hands more horrible damnation—
Fill fast that cup which thou shalt shortly drink.
Thou art the scorn of all the heathen world.
Thou art the laugh of the uncircumcis'd.
Woe 'specially to you, ye Pharisees,
Ye Scribes, Chief Priests, ye Elders of this people !
Your lust of gold it was which slew the Lord.
Your time how short ! quicken your deeds of evil.

SAUL.

Thou, Ananias, prophet of Damascus,
Shalt in the meanwhile die a blessed martyr.

HANAN (*to SAUL*).

Pursue him, for his tongue is full of mischief.

SAUL (*to HANAN*).

We will arrest the man this very day. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

*Palace of Caiaphas.**Enter CAIAPHAS and DRUSILLA.*

CAIAPHAS.

This little word I wish to add, my life,
My only charm in life—this counsel wise
Accept. Tell at Damascus how you hate
The upstart heresy. Whate'er of power
Or dignity in station, what mere bread
I have, it would take from me utterly.
According to your means, resist the foe.

DRUSILLA.

Our sex was made for gentle offices,
Obedience, love, an ear of much attention ;
For meekness, silence, prayer ; for courtesy :
Ask these of me, dear father—such request
Will tend to press me forwards in these duties.

CAIAPHAS.

I had not spoken thus, had I not late

Remark'd, as I conceiv'd, amidst your thoughts
A sympathy with some whom we have punish'd.

DRUSILLA.

I have a sigh even for him who sheds
His brother's blood. Should I not have as much
For him who through ill-judgment goes astray,
And errs with multitudes? 'would that of late
Myself had not remark'd in you much sorrow !
Whence comes that load of grief which lies upon you ?

CAIAPHAS.

My child, I would not have you share that burden.

DRUSILLA.

Cast it on God, to Him it would be light.

CAIAPHAS.

Seek Him in youth, dear child ; the first-fruits yield
To Him of all thine heart and life. He stands
Far off, when of their being the mere dregs
Men would present on his long-slighted altar :
Thy father needs a lamb of virtue infinite
Ere God can justly pardon all his sins.



Farewell awhile, dear angel; duties press :
Take now thy lyre in praise of Him thou lov'st.

[*Exit* CAIAPHAS.

DRUSILLA.

Have mercy, God of Israel, on my father !

(*Sings.*)

Oh Thou, through all the spacious earth the Lord !
In praise of Thee I'll strike the swelling chord ;
O'er ev'ry land shine forth thy power and grace,
Yet none behold Thee like thy chosen race.

This was well seen along the Red Sea shore,
Betwixt the foe behind, the wave before ;
" March onward," saith the Lord, our tribes obey :
That wave becomes their friend, that foe their prey.

This was well seen, as rose through all the gale
Israel's glad shout, from Elah's banner'd vale,
Why, O Philistia, from the battle flee ?
'Tis that the Lord our God hath smitten thee.

This was well seen, and through the earth made known,
When by one angel-arm were overthrown
Assyria's monarch and her mighty host,
Her pride of strength, her loud and impious boast.

Ere long our great Messiah shall appear,
The joyful theme of ev'ry holy seer,
And strive the moments of each lingering day
Our Prince of Peace and Empire to display.

Oh Thou, through all the spacious earth the Lord !
In praise of Thee I'll strike the swelling chord :
O'er ev'ry land shine forth thy power and grace,
Yet none behold thee like thy chosen race.

Enter CHORUS of MAIDENS.

(Sing.)

Night's ebon form afar recedes,
High mounts the orb of day,
Impatient are your prancing steeds,
Haste, lady, haste away !



Age's white locks your presence wait,

Youth too so fresh and gay,

Soon will your sire be at the gate,

Haste, lady, haste away. [*Exeunt* MAIDENS.]

DEUSILLA *sings*.

Ye streams of heavenly truth which flow

From sparkling founts and clear,

And ye fair courts of ancient kings

Once trod by holy seer.

Ye throng'd and joyous palaces,

Responsive to the lyre,

Thou too, O sin-atoning shrine !

Kindling thy mournful fire.

And thou, my sire, whose locks of snow

Portend thy winter's night,

Oh, let me hither come again

With footsteps swift and light. [*Exit*.]

SCENE IV.

*Palace of the High Priest.**Enter CAIAPHAS, ZECHARIAS, and an assembly of
Chief Priests.*

CAIAPHAS.

Members of our august and holy conclave !
I beg, entreat, I supplicate your aid.
Beyond all doubt, the matter to the quick
Touches your chiefest interests ; yea, affects
The very being of your honours due.
Is it your office to maintain entire
What lifts you o'er the heads of nations round—
Your perfect laws, the words of God Himself?
Would ye preserve your garments wholly pure ?
And I the sacred lustre of this breastplate ?
Then let us manfully contend for God
Like them of old, when Korah was o'erthrown.
The modern Korah we have slain already,
And it becomes us to go on and do



The like by all his company. The cause
Of heaven requires and will reward your labours.

CHIEF PRIEST.

None other than the Nazarene, Jesus,
Misnamed Christ, whom thou thyself to die
Adjudgetst, is the man thou pointest at ;
And Caiaphas, all of us will lend thee aid,
From 'neath the widespread heav'ns wholly this name
To blot out, or the brand of infamy
Upon it stamp.

CAIAPHAS.

Ye sacred priests of Zion,
I thank you much ; yea, all must greatly thank you,
Who our Jehovah worship ; ye abhor
And justly trample on the thought that He
To whom the haughty Pharaoh humbly sued
For food and water, for a couch of rest,
For daylight, health, for garments fit for use,
Of whom the mothers through that land might ask,
Where are our first-born ? And the Red Sea wave,

Why is my dark abyss to heav'n expos'd?
Ye would not that a sceptre such as his,
So sacred, so exalted, should to hands
Ignoble pass, unto a man all mute
And downcast when the judge requir'd his answer.
Nor vaunting then his wiles, but as spell-bound,
And as accursed of God, quitting life feebly
And 'mid contempt. As for those later tales,
How He did walk again the earth, appear
And disappear, and reappear, to those
Forsooth whose lot was bound in his; all this
Is naught, ye judge, save empty fallacy.
For before whom would He have wrought such deeds,
If not yourselves, th' opponents of his cause?
But these ye saw not, all the pow'r God gives you
God wills that you should use, his own good work
To uphold with firmness, and to purge the land.

CHIEF PRIEST.

Our voices, counsel, and our hands are yours,
To carry out your great and good designs.

CAIAPHAS.

Know, therefore, that the Galilean blotch,
That sorest pestilence this earth e'er saw;
Now through Damascus walks in open day;
And that the heresy doth ravin there,
Upon the life-blood of our Fathers' faith
Through all our synagogues: and it is said
That Israel there, till now so rich in peace,
Is bowing underneath a weight of discord.
So I advise, that to our elders in it
We send instructions, and in chains transfer
Unto these courts, or do entreat that they
Themselves, by leave of Aretas, do punish
All of those sons and daughters of our Zion,
Who would, by precept or example, tempt
Their brethren to this false religion. Such
Are wholly torn from the great trunk of Abraham,
And every branch beneath them would lay low
Upon the plain by their own falling weight.
Let us send Saul, for what doth well befit

Our present need he largely doth possess.
Is youthful energy required? He has it.
A firm determined purpose? This he has.
A spirit in subtle disputation apt;
A zeal enlighten'd, active, and severe;
And you might seek thro' all the courts of Rome,
Those too of Athens, yet 'twere all in vain,
For his o'erwhelming, his astounding speech,
His endless stores of thought, his gentle streams
Of soft prevailment for the hearts of youth.
Are such the objects of your search? Use then
This ardent friend to Israel's cause. E'en Saul.
And let me add, he prays that he may serve you.
Yea, more than this. You all will pardon me,
If to conduct this deed to happy issue
I have already used my strenuous efforts,
So that Saul doth but wait till you his aid
Accept, ere on his way he find himself.
This he should do before the wakeful foe
Abroad, or nearer home suspect our plans;

But, through some usual or unusual means,
Our schemes appear divulg'd when scarce conceiv'd
by us.

CHIEF PRIEST.

Yet grant our projects should be nois'd around,
Still good will spring even from that mere dispersion
Which through the miscreant crew fear shall produce.

ZECHARIAS.

Revered sire, and honour'd brethren, pause,
I do beseech ye, and his counsel take,
Gamaliel's, in our sacred learning versed,
For guidance sought to, and in honour held
Conspicuous. Oh ! if such terms of praise
As those I hear from you are unto Saul
The pupil, a debt due to him, what then
Is his true meed, what instant following,
Yea, glad acceptance of his plans, whom Saul
Openly glories in, and whom proclaims
His guide in counsel and in all his feelings ?
But how opposed they stand in sentiment,

And in the advice they give touching these matters ;
For while Saul thunders yea, the milder note
Of nay comes from a soul of deeper searching ;
And we do seem to hear the hoary sage
Accuse his pupil of unholy wrath,
And pray that he would stab with wiser zeal
The weak inventions of these erring times,
And from our worship sweep such ponderous forms
As tend to overlay the heart's due homage.

CAIAPHAS.

Thanks, Zecharias, for your homily !
Gamaliel too we thank for his sublime
And sacred sentiments : but meet we not
To-day in council to resist tow'ring
Ambitious purposes, schemes to dishonour
All who are here ? are we not met to oppose
Untaught declaimers, moths that fret our Ephod,
Upstarts malignant of unblushing face,
On their own heads, and on the common weal
Perversely show'ring down, through their vile arts,

Heavier exactions, and more cruel legions
From this world's iron ruler summoning ?

ZECHARIAS.

Hath Cæsar ought against them, let the courts
Of Cæsar punish ; but his courts oft say
These men maintain a creed they find no fault in.

CAIAPHAS.

Art thou not like some sapless broken bough ?
Art thou not like some undermining mole ?
Wilt thou not lead us on to insult, shame,
To scorn and ridicule ? We do abjure
Thy speech henceforth, and from these sacred halls
We warn thee to retreat without delay.
Yes, Zecharias, thou provok'st me much.
To thee, as to ourselves, those courts are known ;
Oft are their interests opposite to ours,
How oft their feelings ! Surely thou art miscall'd
By name of holy seer ; rather, methinks,
Thou might'st be styled some suicidal traitor.
Yea, go, I pray thee, and the mullets collect

Of foreign tyrants, and thyself proclaim
An alien to that land which gave thee birth.

CHIEF PRIEST.

Thou hast well spoken, holy sire—we all
In thy most prudent courses do uphold thee.

ZECHARIAS.

From this assembly I depart in haste,
As you would wish me, and may hostile eye
Ne'er see these gorgeous ceilings prostrate lie !

CAIAPHAS.

As yet they totter not—but true it is,
Your friends are water to our altar's flame ;
Whilst to our cedar beams, our inlaid pillars,
Our artful tapestry and crowded stores,
Which make our temple this world's mighty wonder,
To them they are a devastating fire.

ZECHARIAS.

Oh, sire ! thou might'st go on and strange things tell
Of fear and trembling : suddenly those hands,
Which would the humble Nazarene arrest,

O'erpow'ring ; yea, how oft are palsies, blindness,
How oft vertigoes, all the fruit you reap
Amid attempts like this ! how oft your chains
Only as green withes in the hands of Samson !
How oft the death you execute, the birth
Of hundreds who embrace this novel faith !
'Tis but to-day when one of this new sect,
After short visit here and homeward hasting,
Was, with intent to bring him to your presence,
Or for some covetous and selfish end,
Sought out and found within the holy city.
How sped such ardour other lips shall tell ye.
Ask this of Hanan, Saul's assiduous ally ;
Let him inform you, and let him advise you.
The stranger's name, 'tis said, is Ananias,
Damascus he doth dwell in : lest you follow
Unto his distant hearth, he amply warns you.
So let pursuit here cease, nor in those wilds,
Which safely screen them from your vaunted bondage,
For Ananias or his friends make search.

CAIAPHAS (*to ZECHARIAS*).

He tells his friends that he has seen a miracle,
That Christ to-day has wrought him a deliverance ;
That in the streets men laid rude hands upon him,
That in the midst their strength departed from then .
You speak of Hanan, so perhaps 'twas he,
And with him his companion, even Saul,
Attacked him, and in doing so were palsied :
Yet both are well. The man no names can give us.
And now the miscreant hides himself through fear,
Prepared to fly, as best he can, the city.

[*Exit* ZECHARIAS.

The air is purg'd from every evil taint,
And our great work should make some instant progress.
Colleagues, your signatures I crave. ——

(*They sign a parchment.*)

Through these most stringent means the sons of Satan,
Those contumacious, noisy demagogues,
Who their unholy war maintain so fiercely
Against the Lord's anointed, shall be brought



Back to submission ; or be chas'd away
Into such distant regions as have yet
Scarcely reported their mere names unto us.
Saul shall set forth at earliest dawn, and with him
Carry your high commission,—homeward now,
And you an early notice shall receive
What his resistless zeal hath wrought for us.
Yea, your High Priest will be enclos'd himself,
By Aretas the Arabian's friendly rule,
Within not many days. My personal business
(Of such a kind as needs my ready presence)
Urges this progress, though distasteful to me.
'Twill be performed, as with much speed, so too
With much of privacy. To him whom Saul
So loves and so confides in, even Hanan,
I will entrust my plans. He shall be told
Where I shall lodge when I have passed our frontier,
And I will there attempt to aid and guide him.
As for the stranger Zecharias mentioned,
Lest he our schemes should learn, and by a speed

Equal to yours should frustrate, him shall chains
O'ertake ere he shall reach his city home ;
And to some demon favouring his cause
To tear those chains asunder do we leave it. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Outside the Walls of Jerusalem.*

ANANIAS and GUIDE.

GUIDE.

Your steps no further guidance can require,
So let me hasten back into our Salem.

ANANIAS.

But were we not to part near Stephen's grave?

GUIDE.

Beneath the leafy cope of yonder plane
The martyr sleeps in peace and in the Lord.

ANANIAS.

The night as yet conceals the hallow'd spot.

GUIDE.

Soon shall the sun his wonted race commence.

ANANIAS.

But ere his gates, which look like burnish'd gold,
Permit his egress shall yon city's gates
See Saul rush forth in war against Messias

GUIDE.

It seems as though the sun had lent his strength,
As though the lightning had his swiftness granted,
Unto this wrathful enemy of Jesus.

ANANIAS.

Ill-judging youth ! 'tis not in all his thoughts
That his steed's rushing crest, his own dark frown,
His threat terrific, and his bloody hand
Hasten as on the glancing lightning's wing,
And render darker than the sunless cave
That awful day Jesus our Lord foretold,
When all these purpled hills and verdant meads
Shall be a wilderness most desolate.

GUIDE.

Zion of yore was like a goodly tree,
A glorious shelter from the storm and heat,
And deep and wide her roots spread underground,
All gentle dews and ev'ry gushing flood
Strove to impart to her their healthful aid ;
Thus was it once, but ere long shall she be



A lifeless trunk, scath'd by th' avenging flame
Of angry heav'n, and mouldering on the plain ;
Yet take we heart, for, 'midst the fiery storm,
Th' impetuous bolts of God's displeasure pour'd
On Sodom and Gomorrah, was a Zoar,
A little refuge for the faithful few.

Mayest thou in safety reach the rich Damascus !
There, like the shepherd's faithful sentinel,
Give timely note of this fierce wolf's attack.

ANANIAS.

May all his blessing whose reproach we bear,
Yet from whose pierced side water and blood
Profusely shed give life and peace to man ;
His blessing rest upon your soul, my brother !

GUIDE.

Not one word more betwixt us, else that foe
To Christ, that modern Saul, who scrupleth not
To cast his javelin at the Son of God,
Will o'ertake thee. Oh, may Jesus shield thee !
Brother ! oh, haste, nor stay to bid farewell.

When through the wilds the limpid waters fail,
And ev'ry herb is thirsty in the vale,
May our great Rock his gracious stream display,
And make thee joyful in thy lonely way !

ANANIAS.

And whilst the billows of ill-judging hate
Pursue me o'er the frontier of your state,
May Salem's little ark, from tempest free,
Hold on her course in sweet tranquillity ! *[Exeunt.*

Enter CHRISTIANS, *at the Grave of Stephen.*

(They sing.)

Spirit of Stephen ! thou art gone above,
Beyond the orbs which gem the robe of night ;
There thou art now, in realms of peace and love,
And everflowing beams of richest light.

There thou art now, amidst the blessed throngs
Whose strains perpetual praise the great Supreme ;
And dost augment the sweetness of their songs
By our immortal and exalted theme.



But we are toss'd and driven by the blast
Which sweeps along o'er life's tempestuous sea ;
Full oft our sky with clouds is overcast,
And troubled time obscures eternity.

Jesus ! Thou ledest forth the hosts on high,
Thou dost the while behold each mortal pain :
Be now thy promis'd aid and comfort nigh,
And Stephen's bliss, oh, may we soon attain.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Syria.

Enter SAUL and DRUSILLA.

DRUSILLA.

To Nazarene, O Saul, thy name is terrible ;
He flies thee as the scaly herd leviathan.

SAUL.

Oh, think me not that dragon of the deep !
Oh, think me not a persecuting tyrant,
Whom God at length shall with his sword destroy !

I do but put in force our sacred laws.
We own no God but one, Jehovah He.
Such hath proclaim'd his jealousy, Drusilla,
And wills that in his people we do visit
With death enticers to idolatry.
Impatient is our land to cast them off,
And from her bosom to reject their lips.
I may to many seem most turbulent,
Yea, onward carried at the torrent's rate,
Some vortex whirling round with dizzy pride,
Or open floodgate of th' infernal pit.
But I have oft a downcast aching heart,
Oft sorrow's wave rolls heavily o'er my head
At the sad thought of my lov'd Zion's woes.

DRUSILLA.

Go, weep in Zion o'er the woes of Zion.
Thou hurriest hither on some scheme of blood.
If I mistake not, Hanan journeys with thee.
Silence betrays thee, Saul. Thou must to horse
Full soon, or I may disconcert thy plots.



SAUL.

Be the Lord with thee. [*Exit DRUSILLA.*] I'll to
horse full soon.

SAUL, *solus*.

The superstition doth already wane,
The vermin we are hunting has fled forth
To heathen lands, or is fast seeking them.
We lift the arm, it straightway quits the scene.
Will it not be, that when that ancient city,
Whence sprang the leper Naaman, we approach,
These men with leprous hearts will sorely quake,
And lie conceal'd where the sword cannot reach them.
But ye throng'd cities, and ye lonely caves,
I pray ye, spurn these foes of Israel's faith !
And Thou, Jehovah, of that faith the source,
Pursue them with the vengeance of thine hand.
Oh, from insulted heav'n do Thou cast stones
Upon their guilty heads ; with fire consume them !
And Saul, be mindful of thy sacred order,
Through perils on the land and on the sea,

D

Amidst opposing Jews, opposing heathen,
Within the city, o'er the trackless waste,
In watchfulness, in painfulness, in thirst,
So let Saul sweep these heretics away,
Let him be ever full of wrath against them. [Exit.

SCENE III.

Half a Mile from Damascus.

CHORUS of ANGELS.

Hermion ! thou theme of song, and first to spread
Thy pearly vest beneath the morning's eye,
Summon the purple vapours round thy head,
And all thy brow clothe with humility.

And thou, fair city, like some royal dame,
Or beauteous maiden with o'erflowing dower,
How many lovers' hearts thou didst inflame,
Yet see to-day a happier nuptial hour.

Evanescent Angeli.



Enter old DAMASCENE, from Damascus.

DAMASCENE.

Welcome or not, my bourne of life is nigh,
My youth's bright meads are vanish'd and forgotten,
My manhood's heights are dimly seen afar,
Whilst all around me are but sterile sands,
In death's dark silent ocean soon to end.
From yonder sapless timber I will beg
A short-liv'd vigour, ere those labour'd steps
Which I have placed between Damascus city
And my poor wreck of strength I measure back.

[Sits down on an old tree beside the road.]

*Enter ANANIAS on horseback from Judea, on one side ;
and CHRISTIANS from Damascus, on the other.*

1st CHRISTIAN (*to ANANIAS*).

Welcome, dear brother, welcome to these arms !
But whilst our greeting mingles with the air,
The forests and the hidden murky caves
Of Eastern Syria seem loudly vocal,
And to such safety as 'tis theirs to give,

Invite you urgently. Flee from Damascus,
For many there search for you with dark looks ;
They say not why, but fortune's benefits
Are seldom pressing on us, rather harm
Impendeth.

ANANIAS.

You have reason'd rightly, Brother,
Yet neither you nor I have cause to blush.
My only crime, I glory in it, is,
That in Jerusalem, that chosen spot
Of Him who made the world and all its people,
I have avow'd my trust in Jesus Christ,
Giv'n Him his title, as the Son of God,
Yea, He is God, and Moses of Him spake.
Jesus beholds this fruit I bear his culture,
And He thus prunes me that I bear still more.
Salem's debased priests perceive the blow
Which I inflict upon their hurtful rites,
And would imprison me, would scourge, would slay
me.



Unto the distant forests then I hasten.
Do thou Damascus seek again with speed.
When I Jerusalem quitted, it was said,
And 'twas believ'd, that at the coming dawn,
Saul hither would set out, and that he would
By fearful menaces of death, distress
Our Israelitish brethren here, and from
Profession of the faith the timid scare
And wavering ; yea, that he has commission
To take back such of them securely bound,
As with a stedfast mind refuse to curse
Or to abjure the name of Jesus Christ.
Within few moments he may reach this spot.

DAMASCENE CHRISTIAN.

Then have we all an equal need of haste ;
But this defence from hunger's pallid hand
Which I hold here, claims an acceptance from you.


[Gives him a Bag.]

Take it, and when with safety you can do so,
Let your retreat be known to the Lord's people.

[ANANIAS *embraces the* CHRISTIANS, *who set out*
for Damascus.

ANANIAS.

Jesus ! behold us from thy throne on high,
Our hearts are bound together, but our hands
Are by our cruel foes asunder torn.
Oh ! Prince of Peace, of joy, of liberty,
Over our heads spread thy protecting shield,
Against our enemies draw forth thy sword,
And let them feel thine arm invincible.
Oh ! call to mind the days which have long pass'd ;
Thy servants saw thee then all love and power.
Art thou not He who did the fierce attack
Upon the threshold of thy faithful Lot
Arrest at once. As for his enemies,
Thou led'st them thro' paths of blackest night.
Is thine arm shorten'd that it cannot save ?



Is thine ear heavy that it cannot hear ?
Friend of our fathers ! O befriend their sons.
By all the blood which Thou didst shed for man,
By thy prevailing intercession for him,
Afford us succour in this hour of need.
Through ev'ry trembling step our foes pursue us.
Over our heads they ride with reckless fury,
The floods of their ungodliness affright us.
Dry up those waves, O Lord ! this wrath assuage,
Let hostile Saul be but a thing of naught,
Or hostile Saul thy blessed truths be taught. [Exit.

DAMASCENE, *solus*.

Coming forwards looks towards ANANIAS.

May Jesus speed thee, stranger, nor permit
Thine enemies to triumph in thy capture.
Jesus I once beheld : 'twas in those Courts
Whence He cast forth into the general mart
Vendors of sacrificial doves—'twas said
That most men's hearts in sing'lar honour held him.
No costly vest adorn'd his mortal frame,

Still all his acts were dignity and grace.
His eye was firm and placid, yet 'twas sad ;
He spake the word, and light shone all around ;
He spake the word, and the heart bow'd before Him ;
He spake, and Truth seem'd honour'd as He nam'd her ;
He spake, and deeds of charity and faith
Sprang from the miry sod of prostrate nature.
Devoid of fear, the good his presence sought,
But guilt oft fled, discover'd and confus'd.
Pain and disease, infirmity and want,
Beneath his feet their ebon sceptres cast ;
Nor seem'd indeed the record false, that death
At his command gave up the new-made spoil.
May Jesus speed thee, stranger, nor permit
Thine enemies to triumph in thy capture.

[*Exit* DAMASCENE.]

SCENE IV.

The same as before.

Enter DRUSILLA, HANAN, and Attendants.

DRUSILLA.

Benhadad's palace glitters in the sun,
But Oh ! [*A strong light shines from one side of the Scene.*

Several VOICES together.

The air is all on fire : the judgment-day
Is come indeed ; one moment and the earth
Will be in flames : O God of mercy spare us !

VOICE from above and beyond the Scene.

Why is it, Saul, thou dost me persecute ?

SAUL.

Who art Thou, Lord, who speakest thus unto me ?

VOICE.

Jesus I am whom thou dost persecute ;
'Tis hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

SAUL.

What wouldest Thou, O Lord, that I should do ?

VOICE.

Continue to Damascus still thy course,
And I will there appoint one who shall teach thee :
Unto the Gentile world I send thee forth,
Myriads thro' thee shall see the light of truth,
And win the prize of everlasting life.

DRUSILLA.

Tell me, great God ! what words are those I hear.

HANAN.

With safety all may look around again,
For the sun, as before, doth rule the scene.

DRUSILLA.

We have beheld to-day the sun's great Lord.

Enter SAUL, led by Attendant, and others.

HANAN.

He's blind ! he's blind ! without a gleam of light.

DRUSILLA.

Oh Saul ! Saul ! Saul ! is it not sadly true
That all the sparkling beauteous landscape round
Is a sheer blank unto your sightless eye ?



SAUL.

Most true, my earthly part in darkness lies,
Yet on my soul the Lord hath shower'd his mercies ;
Wondrous to tell, He did discourse with me.

HANAN.

Our senses were all palsied, we heard little.

SAUL.

Jesus of Nazareth I heard, I saw.

DRUSILLA.

Let us haste back and publish every where,
That beyond doubt Jesus was the Messiah.

SAUL.

Damascus seek, for Jesus so ordains.
Proceed we all on foot in lowly silence,
In godly penitence, and do it straightway. [*Exeunt.*

END OF SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Damascus.*CHIEF PRIESTS, PRIESTS, *and* ELDERS *of the Jews.*

CHIEF PRIEST.

The heresy now rageth worse than ever.

PRIEST.

Fiercer against it be our rage than ever.

CHIEF PRIEST.

Yes, hear our nation's voice. Behold this writ :

Through it she bids you each blasphemer seize,

And hurry unto prison and to death.

SECOND PRIEST.

What scroll is that ?

CHIEF PRIEST.

'Twas found a mile from hence.

FIRST PRIEST.

By whom ?

CHIEF PRIEST.

By those who took that Ananias.



THIRD PRIEST.

What, have ye silenc'd that unwearied tongue ?

CHIEF PRIEST.

If bolts and bars can do it.

ELDER.

Ananias

Could not have brought such mandate.

CHIEF PRIEST.

No, 'twas Saul.

FIRST PRIEST.

Hanan his friend is soon to wed Drusilla,
Daughter of Caiaphas.

SECOND PRIEST.

Yet some few days since
Saul was observ'd in talk with Ananias
Within the Temple of Jerusalem.

CHIEF PRIEST.

Did Saul not hither straightway him dispatch,
To warn th' offender, being himself our foe ?

THIRD PRIEST.

The Lord doth hate and punish double hearts.

CHIEF PRIEST.

God, in his wrath, with sudden blindness smote him.

FIRST PRIEST.

Where doth Saul lie?

CHIEF PRIEST.

He flees from God, like Jonah.

Elders and Priests! through Aretas' command,

And through this scroll, strive we, with no delay,

To drag to judgment each suspected heretic.

Whom ye shall seize to-day, be he to-morrow

Before the courts produc'd. *[Exeunt omnes.]*

SCENE II.

Syria.

HANAN and CAIAPHAS, *with Attendant* HEBRON.

HANAN.

Oh, sire! be all our loins in sackcloth wrapt,

All heads be strewn with ashes. Dreadful deed !
While Satan prompted it, did he not tremble ?
Our wretched nation hath cut off Messias !
Jesus of Nazareth ! He was that Prophet
Moses foretold that God would raise unto us.
Is Salem still a city ? or, more deep
In guilt than Sodom, hath the Lord consum'd it ?

CAIAPHAS.

Art thou not Hanan ? Strange indeed such sounds.

HANAN.

Not Hanan who did persecute our Christ,
But Hanan who doth bow the knee to Him,—
Hanan who now doth honour and obey Him.

CAIAPHAS.

But naught of love, or honour or obedience
Unto my sacred robes thy lips express.

HANAN.

“ One man should die for all ! ” the words were thine.
Jesus hath done it ; and now heav'n contains Him.
Foremost to kill, be foremost to obey Him.

CAIAPHAS.

Saul hath the art of treating all such doctrine :
Go back to him.

HANAN.

Know'st thou this character ?

(Giving a Writing to CAIAPHAS.)

CAIAPHAS.

It is Drusilla's.

HANAN.

But the words are Saul's.

CAIAPHAS.

I give my ear to Saul. Read, Hanan ; read.

HANAN *reads.*

Hearken, ye Priests, ye Elders, Pharisees,
And thou much cherish'd name, chief of thine order,
O Caiaphas ! hearken every human soul !
It was the hour of noon, cloudless the sun,
Damascus' massive walls were full in view,
Our unsuspecting prey we thought secure :
But suddenly a light came down from heav'n,



So bright that the sun now appear'd all paleness.
Beneath that piercing beam each eyeball shrank ;
Yet I beheld, through all that dazzling flood,
A human form. These words proceeded thence :
" Why is it, Saul, thou dost me persecute ?"
" Who art thou ?" I replied. " Jesus," said He,
" Of Nazareth, whom thou dost persecute :
" 'Tis hard for thee to kick against the pricks."
I ask'd his will, and from his lips received it :
Then were my trembling limbs raised from the earth ;
But lo ! my eyes were cased in horny mail,
And to this hour I sojourn in deep night.
What shall Christ do which Jesus hath not done ?
I pray ye to embrace this holy faith ;
None other can avert the sword of God,
Now drawn against our nation, nor can other
Unto the realms of bliss mankind exalt.

CAIAPHAS.

I trusted all my hopes to this one bark,
And it has sunk. Oh, was Drusilla there ?

Did envious demon dare to cross her path ?

Is she too lost ?

HANAN.

Yea, sire ! she witness'd much,

And is a Christian : 'tis through God's great mercy.

CAIAPHAS.

This stroke will be my death ; my heart must break.

Oh, Caiaphas ! would that thou hadst died long since,

Hadst from thy birth unto thy grave been carried !

Hebron, conduct me hence. Hanan, farewell !

HEBRON (*Attendant*).

Be sure your daughter soon will cast away

All that doth cause such grief unto her father.

CAIAPHAS.

Alas ! how ill thou readest these sad days !

The chief misleader's arts, so fair in show ;

His specious manners, and his glozing tongue ;

The ready help which Satan ever lent Him ;

The monstrous lie which Satan still puts forth,

That even yet, and in despite of spear,



And nails, and all the ensigns of true death,
This Jesus doth exist, and will full soon
Besiege his enemies with fire and sword ;
All this, by passages from Holy Writ,
By counter threats, by tortures newly used
To meet this new occasion, I've o'ermatch'd
Times without number ; whilst as yet men's fears
Were in their sev'ral bosoms closeted,
And whilst apostacy had found no tongue.
But let this idol of a parent's heart,
Drusilla, who no homage knew to pay
At any shrine, save reason's and her duty's,
One who imposed restraint o'er all her speech,
Advancing carefully, retracting seldom ;
Let such declare she is a Nazarene,
Then is my term of reason at an end,
And my life's being will be ended also. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Syrian Wilderness.

CHORUS of CHRISTIANS.

I.

Sprung from a house bereft of regal power,
Nor striving aught of grandeur to regain,
Born where in virtue lay the only dower,
Where 'mid contempt was drunk the cup of pain,
Jesus ! thou victim of a despot's reign,
And forced thy radiant infancy to hide,
Thou who didst feel the scourge and galling chain,
And wast by crowds derided, crucified ;—
Behold us closely to thy mortal lot allied.

II.

Exalted arm of heaven's almighty Lord !
Outstretch'd in wrath, o'er Satan's boasting pride,
It to chastise through the avenging sword,
Strong in this steel thou dost triumphant ride,
'Mid all the pangs which human hearts betide,

Thou art, as erst foretold, the Prince of Peace ;
Whilst host innumerable, God's throne beside,
Worship our glorious Lord with bended knees,
In names of suffering ours ; oh, own us then in these !

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Court of the Synagogue, Damascus.

PRESIDENT *of the Court of the Synagogue, OFFICERS of
the Court,*

VITELLIUS *(soon afterwards Governor of Syria),*

PRIESTS, JEWS, &c.

PRESIDENT *(to VITELLIUS).*

Our hopes are built on thee, my good Vitellius ;
Direct us further in our paths of danger.
Counsell'd by thee, some prisoners we detain,
To learn the fate which Syria would assign them ;
Others where Stephen paid the forfeit due,
Shall pay theirs also : they are sent to Judah.

VITELLIUS.

Jews, Elders, Priests, your good is near my heart :

I would promote it, and deserve your love.

OFFICER of the Court.

A woman is the prisoner next in turn.

PRESIDENT.

What crime hath she committed?

OFFICER.

Seen a vision ;

Says that the Nazarene is at our gates ;

Calls Him her Lord, her Sovereign, and her Master.

PRESIDENT.

We do object to phantoms ; they disturb

The public mind.

VITELLIUS.

And ev'ry modern phantom

Is of a sort to injure your true prophets,

From Moses to the very latest of them.

PRIEST.

The prisoner is a woman, show her pity.

PRESIDENT.

A woman's tongue hath often overturn'd

The widest empires.

VITELLIUS.

You have spoken wisely.

OFFICER *of the Court.*

This tongue already hath had strange effect.

PRESIDENT.

We must command it into instant silence.

OFFICER.

'Twill only then be still when in the dust.

PRESIDENT.

Produce this doughty preacher of rebellion.

[*Exit* OFFICER.]

VITELLIUS.

No more consults our empire for its safety

Than for the sacred honour of your laws.

PRESIDENT.

We must unite in sweet accord, great sir,

To crush these deadly foes to all the world.

These impious Nazarenes, our Zion cries,

Should all be slain ; let Syria say the same.

Enter DRUSILIA, *attended by* OFFICER, &c.

PRESIDENT (*to DRUSILLA*).

Permit me to inquire your name and kindred.

DRUSILLA.

Daughter of Caiaphas, and by name Drusilla.

PRESIDENT.

Not Caiaphas who is high priest of our nation?

DRUSILLA.

The same.

PRESIDENT.

What is this lady charg'd with, officer?

OFFICER.

We found her preaching to a host of hearers,
Protesting that from out a flaming cloud,
And near the city gates, the Nazarene
Demanded of his enemies the cause
Why with such cruelties He had been treated?
More than an hour this prisoner had harangued
The motley crowd ere we beheld the scene.
Onward we rush'd, and would have seiz'd her straight,
But strangely did the frantic mob resist us.

It is through stealth we have produc'd her here.

PRESIDENT.

Let her be giv'n in charge unto her father.

OFFICER.

Her father is already in our city ;

He is o'erwhelmed with grief, and on his knees

Prays her to cast such false ideas from her.

PRESIDENT.

We will assist her father in his efforts.

VITELLIUS.

Grant her, most noble president, a space

For better thoughts ; if none of these there be,

Pronounce the awful sentence of our laws

Against all Christians and seditious persons.

PRESIDENT (*to DRUSILLA*).

As is our wont, I ask, Dost thou abjure

The cause of Jesus, who is called Christ ?

DRUSILLA.

I lately quitted Salem's honour'd halls,

Opposed, as are yourselves, to all that cause.

And so I journey'd, until near your gates,
And whilst the sun in brighter robes than usual
Look'd down upon his course on either hand,
A light which did as much surpass his beams
As doth the Pharpar in its breadth the Cedron—

PRESIDENT.

Stay, stay, I've heard of that, 'tis wholly false.——
An old man known to me through many years,
And one observant of the truth in all things,
Was at the spot precisely at the moment,
Resting his weary limbs there leisurely ;
He saw the sun, but saw no prodigies.
'Tis ever thus : all these ungodly Christians
Are giv'n up to ev'ry sort of falsehood.
Ye all have heard of Ananias' fate ;
He and his wife Sapphira were struck dead :
So gross their lie that with it on their tongues
God hurried them to judgment and damnation.
They were believers in this strange Impostor.
Saul too, of Tarsus, brought a double heart



To the great work of slaying these blasphemers.

Jehovah saw it, and destroy'd his eyesight.

With God we must be helpers, or in wrath

He will arise and sorely punish us.

(*To DRUSILLA.*)

I do again inquire, Dost thou abjure

The cause of Jesus, who is called Christ?

VITELLIUS.

As thou shalt answer make, let me inform thee,

So shalt thou die or live.

PRESIDENT

(*points to VITELLIUS, and then addressing DRUSILLA.*)

That is Vitellius.

Few here have power such as Vitellius hath.

DRUSILLA.

Let me then tell Vitellius and the court—

Before I speak one word against that Name

You shall asunder tear my sev'ral members,

You shall project them on the blazing pile,

The pointed steel shall pierce them through and through,

The axe shall part this head from all the rest,
Stones of enormous size shall thrust my soul
From its clay tenement, and bury me.

I am resolv'd, so let this answer serve ye. [Exeunt.]

END OF THIRD ACT.



ACT IV.

SCENE I.—ANANIAS *in prison at Damascus.*ANANIAS, *solus.*

Whence art thou, Persecution? whence, that men
Themselves pursued, encircled, sorely torn,
Thrust on by fiends of hell to pit of misery,
Should, in despite of their own proper troubles,
So much concern themselves to aid their foes,
And cause the tear to start from angels' eyes,
As with dire hate to harass and to slay
Those fellow men, who with th' infernal crew,
Engage in constant and successful warfare?
Is it from blackest hell, or realms of light,
Thou comest hither, form with visage rueful.
Oh, why these words? I know thee, whence thou art;
Thou from the fountain of all grace and peace,
Of hope and joy, and glory everlasting;
Thou, from the very heart of Him who wept
Amidst Gethsemane's dark shade, huge drops

Of agonizing love for man's lost soul.
Art hither come, and bringest blessings with thee.—
Oh then enable me to lend no more
A trusting ear to this world's hollow promise !
Oh then enable me the tear of grief
At sight of others' woe, to shed more largely !
To heav'nly contemplation and delights,
Wean'd from earthly toys my soul exalt ;
The seal of my discipleship art thou ;
Celestial monitor, Oh Persecution !
Fully by thee instructed I shall be
Both wise and happy in this life of trial.

Enter SIMON (officer) and Jailor.

SIMON.

Though none can hear it, doth that tongue ne'er cease ?
Through thirst and hunger, doth it labour still ?

ANANIAS.

Is it ordain'd that I be starv'd to death ?

SIMON.

Think not amiss of death, thyself dost hold
That ev'ry heart is filthy as the clod.



That none have access to the God of heaven
But through that man who hung upon a tree.

ANANIAS.

Is it lest I should doubt of thy contempt
Thou comest hither, and thou speakest thus ?

SIMON.

I come to say, as did the ancient seer,
Prepare to meet thy God ; thy doom is seal'd,
Abjure the name of Christian, or to-morrow
Thou to our nation's judgment-hall art sent
Bound with a chain, and there shalt thou be ston'd.
'Twere sin to pity such. (*To the Jailor.*) Leave him his
mess. [*Exeunt SIMON and Jailor.*

Enter an ANGEL.

ANGEL *points to the window of the Cell, then to the door,*
and appears to be in conversation with ANANIAS.

[*Evanescit Angelus.*

ANANIAS.

To-morrow, as the sun sinks towards the west,
Oh much beloved of thy Lord ! he said,

Jesus hath a great work for thee to do.

What work? Is it a work of death or life?

Did not the bright one say he would return?

With friends like these, how light the chains I bear!

Jesus impart thine all-sufficient grace,

That with each power I have I may confess

Myself a Christian, though for thy dear sake,

Torture and death, in their most hideous forms,

Upon me light.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Prison, Damascus.

DRUSILLA *and* CAIAPHAS. CAIAPHAS *kneeling*

to DRUSILLA.

CAIAPHAS.

Once more behold me kneeling at thy feet:

Oh, is it right a parent should do this?

To save his life who tenderly did rear thee,

And to protect thine own from wretched end,

Promise me on one point to curb thy tongue.



DRUSILLA.

Lord Jesus ! seated on a throne in heav'n,
In tenderest mercy look upon my father.

CAIAPHAS.

Oh, horrible ! she makes her prayer to Him
Upon whose head I heap'd my utmost fury.
Though I should never see thy face again,
My daughter, I do fly those impious words.

[CAIAPHAS *proceeds to depart.*]

DRUSILLA.

Oh dearest father, stay one moment longer.

CAIAPHAS.

Whene'er I visit you, you straight pronounce
That hated name ; the man I put to death
I hear extoll'd immeasurably, and see
You kneel to Him who may to me look back
For ev'ry sort of insult and reproach.
But, oh Drusilla, thou art still mine idol !
What wish did e'er find entrance to my breast
But thou hadst part therein ? Misguided child

Of most unhappy parent ! Which exceeds !
Thy soft compliance hitherto in all
My various wishes, or thy deafness now
To all my supplications ? Let me pray,
Where I shall more be heard than thou by Jesus ;
Oh let me help thee e'en in spite of thee.
I go—each moment is of value infinite—
I go. Oh shall I go unto the Lord
Of heav'n, or supplicate the courts of earth ?
I go I know not whither ; I do beg
That when I come again, 'twill then not be
Thine hour of prayer, thine hour of deep transgression.

[*Exit* CAIAPHAS.

Enter female Friend of DRUSILLA.

FRIEND.

'Tis as I said, thy father's heart will break,
He hath a host of foes outside his house,
I mean those envious elders and Vitellius.
'Tis murmur'd that a stroke design'd against him,
E'en to the cutting off of all his honours,



Through this Vitellius, hath now brought him hither.
But what are such things to this new infliction ?
All filial duty in one moment fled !
Oh, ask forgiveness ; at his feet fall down,
Beg him to pray that God would bring thee back.
Besides, thou art no martyr to thy faith,
Merely the victim of thy father's enemies,
And aiding their revenge against thy parent.
Young lady, 'tis no merit to die thus ;
'Tis sore ingratitude ; 'tis grievous sin ;
Thus to rush onward to a violent death,
As thou would'st do, is awful suicide.
Arouse thee, be the stroke for thee design'd
Upon the cheek of those who hate thy father ;
Be still th' admir'd of many an eye around ;
The lov'd, the sought of many a throbbing heart.

DRUSILLA.

My time is short, let it be giv'n to prayer ;
'Tis that which fortifies our feeble souls
Against the shafts of our chief enemies.

FRIEND.

Deluded friend, to reason give thyself.

DRUSILLA.

'Twere reason had you listen'd to my speech
When I before your eyes display'd Messiah.
'Tis something more than reason which I build on—
'Tis hearing, seeing, brightness, darkness, grace,
'Tis proof as vivid as of man's existence.
Saul said (nor were there other words so wise),
What wouldest Thou, O Lord, that I should do?
I too proclaim that Jesus as my Lord.
If it be death to do so, then I die.
Discussion is misplac'd; yes, you must leave me,
Or join with me in prayer to Him of Nazareth.

FRIEND.

Ye sons of Israel, haste and cleanse our land
Ere God in ire consume it utterly. *[Exit Friend.]*

DRUSILLA *sings.*

Where eastern suns their beams of gladness pour,
Where silent darkness broods o'er northern snow,



Where busy nations throng the western shore,
Where Afric's mystic stream first learns to flow ;

Where peopled isles o'erhang th' unruff'd sea,
Where in huge billows rolls the ocean's flood ;
There Christ, exalted Lord, praise waits for Thee,
For all is thine, the purchase of thy blood.

Jesus, come forth ! ye idols, kiss the plain ;
Cast off by all let pride's hard visage lie :
Each soul impure become a sacred fane,
Each heart of stone a fount of charity.

Oh linger not, dear Shepherd of the sheep,
Nor let thy flock still mourn the dreary night ;
God thy advancing steps from ill shall keep,
And amid darkness shall create the light. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

*Damascus.*CAIAPHAS *and* HANAN.

HANAN.

You have well-nigh restor'd my former faith,
Destroy'd the net in which my feet were caught ;
Hereafter will I make but small account
Of flashes in the air and muttering sounds.

CAIAPHAS.

How you delight my heart by these wise words !
You clearly see that none but broken fortunes
Hold by this heresy. Your fame is fair,
Your friendship is desir'd. Example follow'd.
Consort, my Hanan, with approved people ;
That is the class to which yourself belongs.

HANAN.

'Tis very true ; those who uphold this Jesus
Misfortune dogs them all ; they look so lean ;
No smile lights up their face : they ask your alms



For some poor soul at ev'ry breath they draw.
It seems as though to them God dare not trust
A single foot of the good world we live in.

CAIAPHAS.

His blessings are for those who serve Him, Hanan ;
For these idolaters He hath distress,
Imprisonment, yea hath ordained death.
A duty most important lies before you.
I had a daughter, I did watch her fondly,
Remark'd with pride all her expanding virtues,
From ev'ry hurtful influence preserved her,
Her infancy my heart did fill with hope,
Amid my griefs her riper years upheld it.
That treasure I to you have lately giv'n ;
You too are wise and good ; more brilliant yet
And costlier in you I trust to see it.
But oh, this star, like you, did fall from heav'n,
Would that, like you, it could resume its height.
I pray it may be so ; but oh her stern,
Her masculine resolve, when once impress'd

That she has rightly judged. She must recant,
Or otherwise my foes will trample on me,
And I shall lose the jewel of my life.
Come with me, Hanan, to her cell make haste ;
But weigh with care each word you speak to her.
Begin most softly, and with broken accents
Her habits of submission praise extremely,
Her ardent love of truth, her just remarks.
Say one word of her beauty, yet appear
More ravish'd by her mental excellence.
Before you end, for me be mov'd to tears,
Touching that weight which God hath placed upon me,
As her divinely authorized instructor.
I too will weep, if not too grieved to do so.
Come with me, Hanan, all may yet be well. [Exeunt.

SCENE IV.

House of JUDAS, Street Straight, Damascus.

SAUL, *solus.*

What shall I say of thee, Thou Lord of all things ?

The clouds of thy displeasure hover round us,
The tears of thy compassion fill our cup ;
Thy word dissolves man's flinty heart within him,
In ashes lays his sullen towers of pride,
Purges his lip from impious evil speech,
Pours on his parched soul rivers of love,
Ripens humility's rich fruit to sweetness,
Gives prayer its birth, its vigour, and its growth ;
Stamps on each act the seal of thankfulness,
Of faith, of truth, of holiness, of hope.
At what a point in life hath Saul arriv'd ;
Behind, a heart too like the flinty rock ;
Oft, like the flint, emitting hurtful fire ;
Behind, a struggle for each upper seat,
An air and diction lofty as the skies,
A bigot voice against the guiltless rais'd,
Feet which to death pursued him every where.
What lies before ? Jesus hath told me what :
No place among the great ones of the earth,
Seldom the gift design'd to buy my favour,

Or oily speech to dim suspicion's eye.
Instead—th' averted look, the answer rough,
Hostility where late was courtesy.
Many will soon cry out for such as me
Prisons were built, and stoning was ordain'd ;
My life shall be a hedge of piercing thorns ;
My death shall be with violence and uproar.
Still, oh thou cross of Christ, be thou on earth
My lot, my plea before the throne of God.

Enter CHRISTIAN.

CHRISTIAN.

The high priest's daughter is condemn'd to die.

SAUL.

How great a gain—to die for faith in Jesus !

CHRISTIAN.

To-morrow eve, except she pass her word
To change her speech, that sister is no more.

SAUL.

Oh Jesus, be thine aid most largely given,
That with her latest breath she may confess Thee.



CHRISTIAN.

How hard it is when one short word can do it,
Not to pronounce that word and thus avert
Such death as this ! What daughter in the faith
Hath won as yet the crown of martyrdom ?
Forgive my painful fears.

SAUL.

I do, I do.

CHRISTIAN.

That which we hop'd had been her shield and safety,
I mean her birth, her virtues, her repute,
Deeper in trouble plunges her each moment.

SAUL.

Her father sought Damascus, to appease
Some foes of his that strive to ruin him ;
I fear the daughter's death would not offend them.

CHRISTIAN.

Such thought is general.

SAUL.

Oh unhappy Caiaphas !


He urg'd the death of Jesus, then of Lazarus.
On me and on my children, he exclaim'd,
Be all their blood.

CHRISTIAN.

Do ye then hence predict
The fate of all his house?

SAUL.

No change is wrought
But adds another stab unto its pride.—
Where is my townsman Hanan, where is he
Who was to wed Drusilla? Conference
With those of a like faith increases faith:
The torch of love unto our common Lord,
Within me lit so late, will brighter be
When plac'd beside that brother's kindred flame.
Besides, the sorrow of his stricken heart
Would, by the telling of his griefs, be lessen'd.
Go fetch me Hanan, I am jealous greatly
Of his unusual absence. Oft dispersion
Within us worketh sin, and sin dispersion.



Hanan hath seen God's outward signs of power,
But where is Hanan's heart? That is the question—
And whence its hourly food? Prayer or the world?

Enter SECOND CHRISTIAN.

SECOND CHRISTIAN.

All who shall dare to say, as doth Drusilla,
That Jesus did appear outside the city,
And from amidst a lum'nous cloud to Saul
Commission give that he should preach his word,
Have need of flight, their blood is thirsted for.
These are afflicting times to all believers.

SAUL.

Saul fleeth not till Jesus doth command him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

DRUSILLA *asleep in prison.*

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Unto the end unflinching faith maintain,
So thou a glorious crown of life shalt gain.

[*Evanescent Angeli.*

DRUSILLA *awakes.*

DRUSILLA.

Oh what a wondrous dream ! Celestial choirs
Fill'd all the air around ; angels in white
Beckon'd me up to heav'n. Oh faithful be,
To thy last gasp, did each of them cry out,
And thou shalt live in bliss for evermore !
But then what a sad change came over me !
Hanan I saw, I saw my father near me,
They bade me curse the name of Jesus Christ.
Yet Hanan honours and adores the Lord.
Who can interpret all these strange conceptions ?
Whence spring they all, and whither do they tend ?
But should this fancy presage some reality,
I will stand thus, and bar their entrance here.

[DRUSILLA *places herself in an attitude of opposition*

Enter CAIAPHAS and HANAN.

CAIAPHAS.

I come again, dear child, to gaze on thee.

DRUSILLA.

But who comes with thee ? no disciple can :
No such, on pain of seizure, dare approach.

Hanan, look at me, hang not thus thy head ;
 Look at me in the face, and make me answer ;
 I ask, Is Jesus the true Son of God ?——
 What, no reply ? Jesus enthron'd on high
 Be unto me a present help in need,
 Protect me from the snares of enemies,
 And all are such who strive to draw me from Thee,
 Behold in tenderest pity my dear father !

CAIAPHAS (*to HANAN*).

Hear not her blasphemy, let us depart,
 The sun will set before her prayer be finish'd.

DRUSILLA.

And Jesus, if for him who falleth from Thee,
 Who in despite of signal miracles,
 Still yieldeth to his fears, his worldliness,
 Thou hast remission bought by thy dear cross,
 Oh, pardon Hanan and restore his faith.

[*Exeunt CAIAPHAS and HANAN.*

They are both gone. Is he not lost for ever ?
 Oh, thou poor Hanan ! Hardly they that have

Much of this world attain the bliss of heav'n.
Short has this trial been. Praised be God,
Who ev'ry hour displays his mercies to me ;
Praised be Christ for this so ready help,
For this deliverance from the powers of darkness.

[*Exit.*

SCENE VI.

Council Chamber of Jews, Damascus.

JUDGE, PRIESTS, ANANIAS *in chains*, *Keeper of Prison*,
&c.

ANANIAS.

Weigh well my words, so shall ye all be Christians.

JUDGE.

An Israelite should lend no ear to lies.

ANANIAS.

But can ye not perceive the hand of God ?

JUDGE.

God's hand for ages hath been our protector.

ANANIAS.

Doth it ne'er shield the follower of Jesus ?



JUDGE.

Unto our power it doth surrender thee.
God wills thou be to Jebus sent in chains,
There to acquaint thyself with pain and grief,
Nor grants thee many hours ere this be done.
Sharply to punish the profane in speech,
Those who despise our laws and worship idols,
This others doth restrain. Our great Jehovah
Doth hate and bid us slay all Nazarenes.
Touching this dangerous enemy to Israel,
Our judgment being pronounc'd, be it enforc'd.

ANANIAS.

Soon shall ye see descend from heav'n with power
That Man, for faith in whom I shall be slain.

JUDGE.

That wondrous God whom Pilate to death !
Remove this clamorous heretick from our sight.
Jerusalem ere long shall see his blood
Spilt on the ground. Seal up the prisoner's lips.

VOICE from the Court.

Hear each man fully in his own defence.

JUDGE.

'Tis but a thrice-told tale. Jesus was slain ;
This man affirms that He has gone to heav'n,
And adds thereto, that all must needs obey Him.
Such doctrine is rebellion—it is tyranny.

ANANIAS.

God, sirs, would here erect, yea ev'ry where,
A church to worship Him in heart and spirit :
His creature, man, transcends in his account
The empty casket, for beneath its lid
He sees affections and aspirings num'rous :
On these would He employ his wondrous skill,
And make man like Himself, perfect within,
Just as already hath his shell no blemish.
This is my gospel. Purity and love,
A lowly mind, a trust in Holy Writ,
God's broken laws completely satisfied,



Himself for us the sacrificial Lamb,
Pay deference to all, obey the king,
In death to sleep in Christ, to dwell with God ;
Call ye this doctrine, tyranny, rebellion ?
We Satan's tyranny throughout the world,
We his revolt against the throne of heav'n
Ourselves promote, when we oppose the gospel.

JUDGE.

Remove the prisoner, show him some small kindness.

[*Exit* ANANIAS and JAILOR.

(*Aside.*)

We must take heed, or all men will be Christians ;
In my own heart I feel some strange compunctions.

Enter CAIAPHAS.

CAIAPHAS.

Oh spare Drusilla's life, my only daughter !

PRIEST.

'Tis even Caiaphas.

SECOND PRIEST (*to the* JUDGE).

Be thou stern as he.

JUDGE (*to CAIAPHAS*).

The sentence hath gone forth, we must mete out
Impartial justice.

CAIAPHAS.

'Twas the speech of one
She lov'd, led her astray.

JUDGE.

Henceforth her life
Would be a general damage.

CAIAPHAS.

Ye have hearts
With less of feeling than the ground ye tread on.

PRIEST.

Thou hast thyself, ere this, with calmness view'd
Some deeds of blood; yea, hast thyself ordain'd
them.

CAIAPHAS.

Oh taunt me not with that which was my glory.

JUDGE.

Nor us upbraid with acts resembling thine.

CAIAPHAS.

Was it for this I slew the arch-deceiver ?
Was it for this I drain'd my private purse
To hold erect the tottering faith of Israel ?
Have ye no honour for a zeal like mine ?

JUDGE.

We honour you by our attempt to copy you ;
We grant you leave to see, yea to advise
Your daughter ; but, though sacred be your office,
We must cut short this talk.

CAIAPHAS.

In truth it is
The stones which talk to me. Ye do destroy
My daughter and myself at the same moment.

JUDGE.

Remove this ill-starr'd father from the court,
And to his daughter's cell conduct him back.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

END OF FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Street of Damascus.*

Enter two CHRISTIANS of Jewish extraction.

FIRST CHRISTIAN.

Thou didst inquire where Saul of Tarsus lodg'd.

SECOND CHRISTIAN.

Brother, I did.

FIRST CHRISTIAN.

Distressing fears, 'tis true,

Surround the presence of this hot Cilician ;

Revilings, and imprisonments, and deaths

Are all distasteful to the best amongst us ;

Is it thy wish to make a friend of Saul ?

Is it thy wish to screen thyself from stripes

Beneath the arm of those who deal in them ?

Would'st thou direct the shafts of unbelievers

Against the bosoms of the holy brethren ?

But mark me ! Men despise the soft betrayer,



And view him as the worm on which they tread.
Rather go study our historic page,
Our chronicle of prompt deliverance,
Through the most manifest hand of our Jehovah ;
There see our tears of godly penitence,
Born on the day when dire oppression rode
Triumphant o'er our necks, when pestilence
Or ghastly famine stalk'd through all our land ;
Behold these tears low'ring our heads in prayer,
Schooling our hearts in lowliness and wisdom,
Then see our gates of safety and of joy
Quickly reopen'd.

SECOND CHRISTIAN.

For such words I thank you.
The faith and love of many are but faint,
This doth beget suspicion of my purpose.
Brother, my heart with joy o'erflows already,
I see already safety's walls around me ;
At the right chosen moment God awakes,
And his affrighted foes do kiss the dust,

Elders and priests, high priests and throned kings,
May to ill-counsel lend their willing ears,
And to the wise be deaf, issue their writs,
And place them in the hands of untaught zeal ;
But powerless all their scrolls, and Saul, what doth he ?
He prayeth to that Lord he late oppos'd,
No word of blasphemy now soils his lip,
Jesus he lauds, gives Him his titles due,
And thirsts to yield Him all his future life.
Inquire around, many shall tell thee of it.

FIRST CHRISTIAN.

Believe not every tongue. The Pharisee
Is but a whited tomb cov'ring men's bones :
Beware of plots ; go not near Saul of Tarsus.
Know too that that great preacher of the Word,
One of the favour'd seventy, Ananias,
Hath by our foes been seiz'd, now lies in prison,
Will straightway by the high priest's recent order
Be to the boasted city of our nation
In chains transferred.



SECOND CHRISTIAN.

I know it. Jesus tries
The hearts of all who call themselves disciples.
Beyond the grave it is Christians do find
Unbroken rest. Unto our suffering brother,
Oh may the Lord impart sustaining grace !
May each descending stroke be to the scourger
More eloquent for truth than words could be !
Through this sharp trial may the Lord be honour'd !
He shall be so. Strong is that brother's faith,
Nor prison, nor reproach, nor pains, nor death,
Will from his lips extort th' unworthy speech
Against the true Messiah, our great Head. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Banks of the Pharpar.

CAIAPHAS and HEBRON.

CAIAPHAS.

City of wealth and palaces, farewell !
Pharpar, receive me to your utmost depths

Press'd down by woes, my nation's and my own,
Oh let me sink like lead. Let never hook
Nor net draw forth my members from that grave.

HEBRON (*laying hold on CAIAPHAS*).

Oh stay, stay, stay! live unto better times.
Those storms which seem design'd to drown the world
Subside how soon.

CAIAPHAS.

How many were my storms!

But they are o'er. If God forsakes his cause
I may flee also. Never taunting tongue
Shall in my hearing, by th' accursed name,
Drusilla call; or on her head invoke
The death our law ordains. 'Tis death to me
That haply hath the lash her members torn
Ere this. Doubtless great joy to those who hate me.

HEBRON (*still holding CAIAPHAS*).

Live and on others take a like revenge.

CAIAPHAS.

No further parley: I do carry weapons.

Desist, I pray. A long farewell I bid thee.

[CAIAPHAS *throws himself into the Pharpar.*

HEBRON.

Alas, he's gone, but though the closing flood
Had not thus hurried him from light and life,
Still had he died ; the news had broke his heart—
Drusilla is no more. She might till now
Have liv'd, nor had infring'd the court's decree.
Many did hate the master I have lost,
Many with envy view'd his fortunes—this,
Perchance, cut short his daughter's thread of life.
What floods of tears from Christians, yea from
others,
Her sad and sudden exit shall call forth. [Exit.

SCENE III.

SAUL's *Chamber.*

ATTENDANTS *on* SAUL.

FIRST ATTENDANT.

Saul now doth sleep.

SECOND ATTENDANT.

His body is weigh'd down
By long continued watchfulness. Three days
Are fled since he with Jesus converse held ;
Through all this while unceasing were his prayers.

FIRST ATTENDANT.

This Hebrew was design'd t' enlarge our hearts,
And raise us greatly o'er our former selves.

SECOND ATTENDANT.

Vainly each rocky height, each purpled hill,
Standing around our rich and ancient city,
Would lift their voice in one harmonious prayer
For his prolonged presence. He doth chide
In sleep the tardy hours ; on fancy's wing
Already hath regain'd his much lov'd home,
Jerusalem, for hers are all his thoughts.

FIRST ATTENDANT.

Oh what a sad return he there will meet with !
For sooner far all pavements could he strew
With prostrate Jupiters, Nisrochs, and Baals,

Than from those sons of circumcision rend
Their breastplate of conceit, and vest of form.
Zion doth spurn the name which he now lauds,
And strives to blot it from all memories. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Plain near Damascus.

CHRISTIANS *beholding the dead body of* DRUSILLA.

FIRST CHRISTIAN.

Oh is it thus the high priest's daughter dies ?

SECOND CHRISTIAN.

Is it thus God the father's sins doth visit ?

THIRD CHRISTIAN.

Is it thus God the daughter's faith rewards ?

FOURTH CHRISTIAN.

Oh shapeless wreck of a once beauteous vessel !

FIFTH CHRISTIAN.

Spirit of heav'n, lately a mortal worm !

FIRST CHRISTIAN.

Short but severe our sister's trials were.



SECOND CHRISTIAN.

Her life a host of days compris'd in one.

THIRD CHRISTIAN.

The light of years beheld in one bright beam.

FOURTH CHRISTIAN.

Oh had she sojourn'd still in this dark world,
To thousands had she told the things she had seen !

FIFTH CHRISTIAN.

Had seen th' attire which Jesus now doth wear !

FIRST CHRISTIAN.

Had heard from heav'n itself the word of life !

SECOND CHRISTIAN.

Perfect are all the ways of God, though hid
From mortal eyes often by thickest clouds.

THIRD CHRISTIAN.

On ev'ry gash this mangled corpse displays
Christ can bestow a tongue to preach his gospel.

FOURTH CHRISTIAN.

Early to-morrow we must flee that sword,
Which Jewish avarice and bigotry

Have now, with bitter hate, against us drawn
Around the palace gates of Aram's monarch.

FIFTH CHRISTIAN.

Let us not stop this side the eastern bank
Of the great lake.

FIRST CHRISTIAN.

Yes—though the way be long
So is the arm of persecution longer.

SECOND CHRISTIAN.

Though prowling wolves should track us to our bed,
Though heat by day oppress us, and by night
The frost enchain our bodies to the earth,
More welcome this than the sad prison's gloom,
The tearing lash, the death of infamy,
Which close pursue us through the high priest's man-
date. [*Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE V.

*Streets of Damascus.*CHRISTIANS, *as in* Scene I., Act V.

FIRST CHRISTIAN.

What, met again? I fancied you with Saul.

SECOND CHRISTIAN.

I heard that Caiaphas was in Pharpar drown'd,
And sought to learn the truth of such report.

FIRST CHRISTIAN.

What is the fact?

SECOND CHRISTIAN.

His body drifted straight,
Whence, with a sing'lar haste, 'twas dragg'd ashore.

FIRST CHRISTIAN.

Alive or dead?

SECOND CHRISTIAN.

They say, no matter which.

FIRST CHRISTIAN.

Why so, why so?



SECOND CHRISTIAN.

He's bent on self-destruction.

Should this Vitellius be supreme in Syria ;

Rather than brook the change, where water fails,

He'll try the sword, the cup, the cord, the dagger ¹.

Once more, adieu, dear brother in the Lord. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

SAUL and SIMON, *Officer of the Synagogue, with*

ATTENDANTS.

SIMON (*to ATTENDANTS*).

Ho, he is here, and blind, as was reported.

(*To SAUL.*)

Dost thou still live in sin, smitten of God ?

At once confess thy crimes ; Jehovah then,

So let us hope, will give thee back thine eye-sight.

Encompass, bind him, be there no delay.

[*The ATTENDANTS begin to seize SAUL.*]

¹ Historically true.

SAUL.

Oh hear me for a little space !

SIMON.

Hear thee ?

'Tis ours to seize, enchain, to scourge, to slay thee.

SAUL.

This is thine hour of mercy, from thy lips
I have it, Lord ! how is that mercy veil'd !

SIMON.

What mercy hath the Lord of heav'n for thee ?
He doth abhor the hypocrite ; to all
At length He doth expose him ; so, ere long,
Shall none be more abhorr'd, despis'd, than thou.

SAUL.

But how dissembled I ?

SIMON.

Thou didst send forth
That Ananias to forewarn the Christians.
He's now in chains, and through those very powers
Thyself didst bring, shall soon in Salem be



Again and duly punish'd. One already
 We have dismiss'd from life ; yea, even a woman,
 Who likelier than thyself, through all her heart,
 To have diffused this deadly heresy ?
 Oh fall beyond all records of the past,
 Daughter of Caiaphas bowing to his name,
 Whom, through his office, Caiaphas lately slew !
 Hanan, a late associate of thine,
 Recants, and to our power he hath betray'd thee.
 Conduct the miscreant forth now ye have bound him.

[*To the ATTENDANTS.*

*Enter an ANGEL leading ANANIAS, afterwards a number
 of CHRISTIANS. SIMON turns round, and at
 the sight becomes insensible. ANGEL disappears.
 Whilst SIMON is removed by his Attendants,*

ANANIAS, *aside.*

Yes, it is he ; it is the very same
 With whom, now some days gone, I did converse
 Within the precincts of our holy temple.
 When he then spake my safety was endanger'd,

For he so look'd as though 'twere clemency
Whene'er he aught prescrib'd for such as me
Short of imprisonment, and stripes, and death.
But the whole character of his face is chang'd,
Yet, as 'twas then, so 'tis the symbol still,
Of all beneath it, pride or lowliness.

ANANIAS (*to SAUL*).

Brother, the hour is come when Christ again
Shall his most blessed mercy openly
Display to thee. Saul, of the favour'd city
Tarsus, and of the honour'd lineage
Of Jacob's much lov'd Benjamin (but who
Henceforth shall be by loftier titles known),
He who drew up thy visual ray to heav'n,
Absorb'd by that empyrean light around him,
Even Jesus, whom thou sawest on the way,
Sendeth me to thee with his precious gifts.

ANANIAS (*to the rest present*).

Ye groups around me ; Syrians, Jews, Arabians,
Open your eyes, God's wondrous power behold,



Open your ears, with all your hearts believe.
Christ hath already braced his buckler tight,
Put on his robes of glory, and his spear
Lifted on high. Let all disciples sing,
Yea, shout for joy, for nigh is their salvation.
Let all the nations sing ; Christ comes to raise,
From hell beneath to brightest thrones above,
Souls as the stars of heav'n for multitude.

SAUL (*plaintively*).

Unto the mournful past that manly tone
Carries my thoughts ; for whilst thy words prophetic
Are earnest of much mercy for all kingdoms,
Thy voice brings to my mind those lofty threats
Against thy life my lips so lately utter'd.
Thou art no other than that Ananias,
Against whose faith I waged unholy war,
Near to our temple, sadly strengthening thus
Those vultures of God's ire which hover round
Devoted Jebus ; oh forgive that deed.
Praised be God, thou hast escap'd our snares.

Praised be God, thy fierce pursuer lies
The willing captive of his gentle prey.

ANANIAS.


Christians sustain no wrong, no malice bear :
'Tis Jesus who is wrong'd ; He hath forgiven thee.
Oft have I pray'd the Lord to quench thy wrath
And light the flame of holier zeal within thee ;
He heard, and gloriously hath answer'd me.
Thou art a special vessel of his grace ;
List to thy title—to the Gentile world
Their chief apostle. They shall hear thee, Saul ;
Accept the gospel at thine hand and live.
Nations shall break the gods which art hath made,
And at thy feet drink of salvation's wells ;
Myriads in search of holy, heav'nly truth
Shall read it in the page of Saul of Tarsus ;
And as thy words thus mighty, so thy deeds ;
Earth's boasting powers may forge their galling chains,
Encircle Saul with triple gates of brass,
Shout it abroad what death he ought to die,



Commence the mockery of his trial, yet
Far less a mockery is it than doth please them,
For soon the pillars of their strength are shaken ;
Those tremble whose aspect affrighted late,
And consternation sits on every brow,
Except on one—beyond the reach of harm,
No fear hath he amid the general sadness.
Such art thou, stricken Saul ! some, who just now
Conducted to these wonder-smitten towers
Thy trembling and unwindow'd tenement,
Proclaim'd thy future life a mournful void ;
For, to the judgment of the carnal eye,
God had quite cast away this blasted pile ;
But God, who bringeth down, can raise again ;
He who did cause that wound, can heal that wound ;
From this dark cloud Saul starts his race of glory,
His wide invasion of the realms of Satan,
Hence dates a fame which time shall never shroud.

CHORUS of CHRISTIANS.

Rise, Heav'n-selected ! on undaunted wing ;



Assail the tents of Satan high in air
Wide spread, and since the blot on Eden's bowers,
Casting o'er all this earth destructive darkness.
Arm'd with the fiat of the one true God,
Hurl from Olympus' height the fabled rule
Of Gentile deities. Draw forth thy sword,
The Spirit's piercing word, and to the winds
Scatter th' ideal and unsightly forms,
Which men have worshipp'd in their sottishness.
To whence they sprang, to the dark womb of night,
Or the dank stifling vapours of that court
O'er which grave Mammon reigns, forthwith chase off
The demon Superstition and her spawn,
Witchcraft and spectres, elves, nocturnal fays,
And goblin stories of the twilight hour.

ANANIAS.

Our God hath not or hands or eyes as we,
And man He could enable otherwise
Than through his members mighty deeds to do ;
Yet here God forms the hand, constructs the eye.



Oh Saul ! that Jesus whom thou lately saw'st,
Wills that thy seal'd-up eyes resume their service ;
And, blessing far beyond the gift of sight,
That in thee should abound the Holy Spirit.

[ANANIAS *puts his hands on the head of SAUL, who
immediately rises up, and has his sight restored.*

SAUL.

Once more, O sun, I hail thy sov'reign beams ;
Ye crystal fountains of eternal light,
Oh with what ecstasy do I anew
Drink of your living streams ; ye longed for,
Ye brethren, sisters, fathers in the Lord,
Oh how these orbs, after this lengthen'd pause,
On the rich banquet of your presence revel.
Yet all the joy which earthly things can yield
Is but as chaff against that knowledge weigh'd,
The knowledge of the grace of Jesus Christ.
If light you covet, come to this great Light ;
If safety, clothing, food—none, as doth Christ,
Bestows these on us. Carry we back to Him

What He hath wrought within us—contrite hearts,
That love He first begat within our souls,
That speech He taught to flow, those deeds of faith
And charity, which all are gifts of his.
Concerning Saul, these few words shall he speak :
No chain of snowy heights, ambition's check,
No lake, no sea, no breadth of thirsty sand,
No realm bound up in ice, no tropic sun
Should hem him in ; neither should fear o'erwhelm,
Nor lucre tempt him ; onward let him press,
With precious gifts and awful threat'nings charg'd,
For ev'ry soul beneath th' expanse of heaven ;
Be such his life.

Oh death, thou gate of bliss,
Saul stoned Stephen calling on his God,
How bless'd Saul's lot would be, if through God's grace,
That same bright martyrdom should be his own.

[Exeunt omnes.]

CHORUS of ANGELS.

To sparkling realms we speed our gladsome way,

To lands where clouds ne'er dim the golden day,
Where never starts the tear of pain or woe,
But where, in ceaseless streams, all pleasures flow.
Yon world of light, 'tis there in doubtful view ;
This breathing earth, 'tis lost in ambient blue.
Yet oh, should He again, man's wakeful friend,
Hither these hands in sweet commission send,
Back to this sin-sunk orb we fly, we fly,
On the swift wing of love and ecstasy.

[Evanescent Angeli.

THE END.

LONDON:
GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
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